

Letter

Does the present national interlending system meet the needs of your users?

Do you think that there is a need for national co-operation among art libraries?

Do you believe that the needs of art libraries are known at national level?

Ought there to be a national system for the acquisition of the full range of art library materials?

Do you have any opinions, comments, evidence on these and related issues?

For some time now ARLIS Council has felt some disquiet about such matters and in July last year it set up its Committee for National Co-ordination of Art Library Resources to look into them. At present the members are; Michael Strain (Chairman), David Dean (British Architectural Library), Trevor Fawcett (University of East Anglia), Ruth Kamen (British Architectural Library), John Matthews (Bristol Polytechnic), Antony Symons (Tate Gallery), Stephen Vickers (BLLD).

Our terms of reference are:

To consider existing provision of, and access to, library resources for the visual arts at the national level in relation to present and future needs, and to make recommendations.

Very broadly we are considering, for example, such problems as the differing information needs of designers, architects, and historians etc., and how these user patterns should be reflected in the provision of national resources. We are attempting to co-ordinate information on the present acquisition policies of libraries in order to discover areas of deficiency. We are looking into the present role of the British Library and attempting to assess its position in relation to national needs in the visual arts.

We feel that our recommendations, which could become the basis of official ARLIS policy, may lead to some of the most important initiatives ever undertaken by ARLIS. In this country ARLIS is the only voice of art librarians and it is only through ARLIS that something will be done! We need *your* help. Please contact any of us with your ideas, views or information. I can assure you that they will receive our full and considered attention.

Michael Strain

Ealing College of Higher Education